TREASURY DEPARTMENT 418

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SECRET SERVICE EXPLAINS VARIATIONS IN $20 BILLS

Secret Service Chief James J. Rowley said today that he wanted to assure citizens who had noticed discrepancies in engravings of the White House on the reverse side of two different issues of $20 Federal Reserve notes that both issues are genuine.

His statement was in response to inquiries being made at many Secret Service offices around the country.

The Chief explained that the engraving plate from which the bills are printed was changed in 1948 to reflect structural alterations and modifications made in the White House and grounds since the previous issue of $20 bills in 1929.

Rowley said the inquiries indicated some concern on the part of the public that the 1948 bills might be counterfeit. There are a few "stragglers" of the old-style 1929 bills still in circulation, Rowley explained, and anyone comparing the two versions side by side might wonder about the difference in the two White House views.

"There is no cause for alarm", Rowley said. "The notes are not counterfeit. Happily, the inquiries indicate that many citizens are examining their money carefully -- and this the Secret Service has always urged as being the most effective weapon against counterfeiting."

The 1948 notes show the White House with the balcony added to the south portico at the second-floor level and with four chimneys instead of two, Rowley said. Individual panes of all visible windows could be clearly discerned in the 1929 design, but in the 1948 notes the bottom portions of the windows are in solid color, Rowley pointed out.

Another variation in the newer bills, he added, is that the grounds are a deeper green, due to heavier foliage of trees and shrubs. The White House flag hangs at an angle from its staff in the more recent engraving, while in the 1929 picture it flew straight out. The legend beneath the building was changed from "White House"on the 1929 bill to "The White House" on the newer version.

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